

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 3 November 2000, F-15C, serial number 78-0489, assigned to the 44th Fighter Squadron, 18th Wing (WG), Kadena Air Base, Japan, ingested a binder containing aircraft Air Force Technical Order (AFTO) Forms 781, AFORMS Aircrew/Mission Flight Data Document, shortly after a 0825 local time takeoff. The ensuing engine damage caused an engine over temperature condition correctly analyzed by the mishap pilot. He complied with appropriate checklist actions, reduced aircraft gross weight and safely recovered the aircraft at Kadena Air Base. After the mishap pilot parked the aircraft and shut down the engines, maintenance personnel inspected the aircraft for damage. They found extensive damage to the core modules of both engines, damage beyond the repair capability of Kadena Air Base. There were no deaths, injuries or property damage as the result of the mishap.

The mishap aircraft was number four of a four-ship, supposed to takeoff, fly to Korea for dissimilar Air Combat Training, and return to home base. Weather conditions, operational planning, scheduling, briefings and pilot related activities were not factors in the mishap.

Although not a factor in the mishap sequence, maintenance training and certification documentation in the 44th Fighter Squadron needs immediate attention. Maintenance shift manning schedules, on-the-job trainer certification and individuals' training documentation were incomplete at the time of the mishap as well as at the time of this investigation.

Board President opined the qualified aircraft crew chief failed to adequately finish preparing the aircraft for the scheduled mission. Specifically, the aircraft crew chief failed to properly store the AFTO Form 781 binder and the enclosed forms as prescribed by local procedures. As a result, shortly after takeoff, the mishap pilot raised the landing gear handle and the forms were blown into the slipstream and ingested into the landing gear wells and into both engines.

Under 10 U.S.C. 2254(d), any opinion of the accident investigators as to the cause of, or factors contributing to, the accident set forth in the accident investigation report may not be considered as evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding arising from an aircraft accident, nor may such information be considered an admission of liability by the United States or by any person referred to in those conclusions or statements.